

REMARKS

This is in full and timely response to the above-identified Office Action. Reexamination and reconsideration in light of the proposed amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

The rejection of claims 1-7 and 9 under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over either of i) Australian Patent Specification 262321 to Cave, or ii) GB 2186612 A to Miyamoto, is respectfully traversed.

It is submitted at the outset that, in order for a prima facie case of obviousness to be established in accordance with 35 USC § 103, the hypothetical person of ordinary skill must, while working with a total lack of any knowledge of the claimed subject matter and without any inventive activity, be able to arrive at the claimed subject matter given the teachings of the references applied.

In this response, claim 1 has been amended to call for the printed face to be formed at a location selected to be grasped by a user when fastening the seat belt, and for the printed face to be embossed to prevent slippage from the user's grip and to facilitate the putting on and taking off of the seat belt. Full support for this amendment is found in the specification. See page 2, lines 15-17, and page 7, lines 20-22, by way of example.

It is submitted that neither of the references which have been applied against the claims disclose or suggest this improved safety feature.

Australian Patent Specification 262321 to Cave discloses a seat belt which is provided with a fiber pile for the purposes of attenuating the detrimental effect of a normal type seat belt rubbing abrasively on the user's clothing. The pile is preferably formed on both sides and is arranged to adhere to the clothing of the wearer. While the pile can be patterned, this patterning is intended only to provide aesthetic value and has no other disclosed function.

It is submitted that this reference is not suggestive of a painted face such as claimed. The fiber pile which is used is different in nature from the claimed paint.

GB 2186612 A to Miyamoto, on the other hand, shows a high visibility material formed on the belt at a location which different from that which is grasped when putting on or taking off the seat belt. The purpose of the belt arrangement disclosed in this reference is also different from that of the claimed subject matter. In Miyamoto the object is to render the belt easily visible from outside of the vehicle and therefore focuses on portions of the belt which pass over shoulder and/or extend into clear view. This tends to lead consideration away from the portions of the belt to which the claimed subject matter is directed.

It is respectfully submitted that obviousness can only be established by combining or modifying the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention where there is some teaching, suggestion, or motivation to do so found either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art. *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988); *In re Jones*, 958 F.2d 347, 21 USPQ2d 1941 (Fed Cir. 1992)." M.P.E.P. § 2143.01 (emphasis added).

Newly Presented Claim

A new claim 10 is presented for examination. This claim is set forth in terms of means plus function. Support for this claim is in the specification. See page 2, lines 15-17 and page 7, lines 20-22, by way of example.

This new claim is patentable over the art in that it sets forth a structure which prevents slippage of the user's grip and facilitates the putting on and taking off of the seat belt. It is submitted that none of the art discloses or suggests this structure.

Conclusion

It is submitted that the claims pending before the PTO are allowable over the art applied for at least the reasons advanced above. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of this application is courteously solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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MARKED-UP VERSIONS OF AMENDED CLAIMS

1. (Once amended) A seat belt with a printed face for a vehicle, in which a printed face of a character, a mark and a pattern is formed [at] on one face of the seat belt formed a band shape woven with polyester at a location selected to be grasped by a user when fastening the seat belt, the printed face being embossed to prevent slippage from the user's grip and to facilitate the putting on and taking off of the seat belt.